

that not a human shadow glided over my pages which might not be traced to its substance.

In the storm that now bursts Contarini's chances of a political career are wrecked; and even if it were otherwise his desire for worldly success is gone. Analysing<sup>1</sup> his own character, he recognises that he has been •• selfish and affected," entirely ignorant of the principles of genuine morality,' and with ' a total want of nature in everything connected with him.' He determines to re-educate himself. Considering himself a poet, he resolves to pursue a course which shall develop and perfect his poetic power; and, as the first step must be to gain an acquaintance with men and nature in all their varieties and conditions, he bids farewell to Scandinavia and sets out upon his travels.

In all this there is much that is of the first importance as a picture of Disraeli's childhood and youth.: though whether it equally well depicts the formation of the poetic character is quite another matter. Some of the ingredients that go to the making of the true poet are to be found in Contarini as they are to be found in Disraeli himself. The high imagination, the brooding temperament, the wild ecstasy — even in some degree the creative faculty and the self-devotion of the artist are there; and yet there is an indefinable something which we look for in vain. There are elements, moreover, in Contarini's character — a fierce and ravening ambition, a consuming thirst for power and greatness — which assuredly were present in the young Disraeli also, and have very little to do with the true poetic temperament. In those perpetual oscillations of Contarini's will between the active and literary careers it is the author's artistic purpose to have us believe that poetry is the real vocation, and that the bias for action is factitious. But the impression really left on us is exactly the opposite. We see Contarini in action; we are only told that he is a poet;